

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15  
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FM AMEMBASSY SUVA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6002  
INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA  
AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY  
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON  
CINCPAC

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PFOR, FJ  
SUBJECT: ALLIANCE GOVERNMENT DEFEATED IN GENERAL ELECTIONS

REF: A. SUVA 0177  
B. SUVA 1450 (76)

1. PRIME MINISTER RATU MARA'S RULING ALLIANCE PARTY HAS  
FALLEN THREE SEATS SHORT OF A MAJORITY IN THE GENERAL  
ELECTIONS, LOSING THE RIGHT TO GOVERN AFTER ELEVEN YEARS  
IN OFFICE AND PRECIPITATING POLITICAL UNCERTAINTY WITHOUT  
PRECEDENT IN FIJI. THE VOTE COUNT WAS COMPLETED LATE  
YESTERDAY AND RATU MARA CONCEDED. FINAL TALLY FOR THE  
52 HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVE SEATS WAS 26 FOR INDIAN-LED  
NATIONAL FEDERATION PARTY (NFP), 24 FOR ALLIANCE, 1 FOR  
FIJIAN NATIONALIST PARTY (FNP), 1 INDEPENDENT, AGAINST  
18, 32, 0, AND 2, RESPECTIVELY, IN OLD HOUSE.

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2. MOST IMPORTANT VISIBLE FACTOR IN ALLIANCE DEFEAT  
WAS EFFECTIVENESS OF SPOILER ROLE PLAYED BY RACIST FNP,  
FLAGGED IN REFTELS, WHICH HELPED FORCE PREDICTED  
REDUCTION IN ALLIANCE MAJORITY JUST BELOW THE WINNING  
LEVEL. OTHER IMPORTANT ELEMENT IN ALLIANCE DEFEAT,  
AND EQUALLY INCALCULABLE, WAS RESENTMENT AMONG ETHNIC  
FIJIAN WITH SOME ALLIANCE REPS WHOSE INTEREST IN

CONSTITUENTS BECAME MANIFEST ONLY AS CAMPAIGN WARMED.  
WITHOUT THESE TWO COMPONENTS THE DISORGANIZED NFP, THOUGH  
IT MANAGED PAPER OVER INTERNAL DIFFERENCES IN CLOSING  
DAYS, WOULD NEVER HAVE ACHIEVED UPSET.

3. MAJOR INFLUENCE OF SMALL BUT RABID FNP ON ELECTION  
OUTCOME BASED ON FIJI FOR THE FIJIAN PLATFORM AND CHARGES  
MULTI-RACIAL ALLIANCE, THOUGH FIJIAN LED, HAS BETRAYED ETHNIC  
TRUST. THIS APPEAL (A) DRAINED FIJIAN VOTES FROM ALLIANCE  
CANDIDATE HOLDING SEATS BY SMALL MARGINS, (B) PERSUADED  
MANY FIJIAN VOTERS TORN BETWEEN RACIAL APPEAL AND HABITUAL  
ALLIANCE ALLEGIANCE TO REFRAIN FROM VOTING, AND (C)

PROMPTED UNEASY INDIAN VOTERS TO SWITCH FROM ALLIANCE TO  
NFP, WHICH MORE EXPLICITLY CHAMPIONS INDIAN INTERESTS.  
SAKIAFI BUTADROKA, FNP PARTY LEADER AND SOLE SUCCESSFUL  
CANDIDATE, NOW CROWS THAT HE ACHIEVED AIM TO DISCREDIT  
ARCH-FOE RATU MARA AND ALLIANCE BY DEMONSTRATING TRUTH  
OF HIS ASSERTION THAT TERMS OF INDEPENDENCE MARA NEGOTIATED  
COULD NOT INSURE AGAINST INDIANS GOVERNING NATIVE FIJIAN.  
(IN A SENSE, FNP CAMPAIGN RESULTS FROM PERSONAL VENDETTA  
SINCE MARA OUSTED BUTADROKA FROM ALLIANCE WHEN LATTER  
ESPOUSED EXCLUSION ALL INDIANS.)

4. VICTORS EVEN MORE ASTONISHED THAN ALLIANCE AT LATTER'S  
OVERTURN, AND COMPLETE CONFUSION PREVAILS WITHIN ALP OVER  
COURSE TO FOLLOW NOW THAT MANDATE THRUST INTO ITS UNREADY  
HANDS. MY SOUNDINGS WITH STUNNED LEADERSHIP BOTH ALLIANCE  
AND KNFP INDICATE DENOUEMENT SOME DISTANCE AWAY, WITH ANY  
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ONE OF THE FOLLOWING IMMEDIATE POSSIBILITIES OPEN:

A. NLF FORMS GOVERNMENT. BUT IT MUST SUPPLY NON-  
VOTING SPEAKER OF HOUSE, REDUCING HOUSE SEATS TO 25,  
SINCE ALLIANCE UNWILLING TAKE SPEAKERSHIP IN CIRCUMSTANCES.  
IT WOULD TRY TO WIN OVER SINGLE WINNING INDEPENDENT, RATU  
OSEA GAVIDI, WITH CABINET SEAT OR, BETTER STILL, OFFER  
HIM SPEAKERSHIP. BUTADROKA'S SINGLE FNP SEAT WOULD REMAIN  
AS HIGHLY UNSTABLE ELEMENT.

B. NFP INFORMS GOV GEN IT UNABLE RULE EFFECTIVELY  
WITH EVER-PRESENT PROSPECT OF LOSS OF CONFIDENCE.  
GOV GEN THEN MUST EITHER CALL NEW ELECTIONS OR ASK  
ALLIANCE FORM MINORITY GOVT. ACCORDING NFP SEC GEN  
THERE IS AT LEAST EVEN CHANCE OF THIS.

C. ALLIANCE FORMS MINORITY GOVT. AT GOV GEN BEHEST  
AND LOSES ON VOTE OF CONFIDENCE WHEN PARLIAMENT CONVENES  
NEXT MONTH. GOV GEN DISSOLVES PARLIAMENT AND CALLS FOR  
ELECTIONS.

D. ALTHOUGH RATU MARA HAS EMPHATICALLY RULED OUT

COALITION AS MATTER OF PRINCIPLE, HE APPEARS TO HAVE LEFT KCRACK OPEN TO PERMIT LAST MINUTE CHANGE OF MIND. THERE IS STRONG BACKING WITHIN NLF FOR A MARA-LED COALITION AND FORMER OPPOSITION LEADER SIDDIQ KOYA REPORTEDLY SEEING MARA TODAY TO APPEAL FOR THIS. PRESIDENT OF NLF, MRS. NARAYAN, HAS PUBLICLY SUPPORTED SUCH A SOLUTION AND RIEING YOUNG NLF PARLIAMENTARIAN JAI RAM REDDY ADVOCATED PARTNERSHIP TODAY WITH RATU MARA AT HEAD. BUT ALLIANCE LEADERS TELL ME IMMEDIATE POST ELECTION STRATEGY IS TO GO INTO QOPPOSITION, VIGOUROUSLY MEND FENCES IN KCONSTITUENCIES, BRING FRAGILE NLF GOVT. DOWN ON VOTE OF CONFIDENCE LATER IN YEAR AND RETURN TO POWER. THE PROUD RATU MARA CLEARLY DERIVING BITTER SATISFACTION FROM NKLF DILEMNA, HAS DECLARED HE WILL NOT PARTICIPATE IN EC/ACP CONFERENCE HE WAS TO HOST, IMPLIED NLF WOULD BE UNABLE GOVERN, AND ANNOUNCED HE WILL LEAVE FOR HOME ISLAND TOMORROW FOR A LEAST WEEK.

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5. A REAL PUZZLER FOR NLF IS NEED TO COME UP WITH ENOUGHT FIJIANS FROM OWN RANKS FOR APPOINTMENT TO HIGH POSTS IN ORDER VITIATE SPECTACLE OF IKNDIANS GOVERNING FIJIANS IN COUNTRY LATTER CONSIDER THEIR OWN. SOURCES IN BOTH PARTIES AGREE THERE ARE NONE OF SUFFICIENT STATURE IN NLF FOR APPOINTMENT AS PRIME MIN. AND VERY FEW WHO WOULD DO IN CABINET -- A FURTHER ARGUEMENT FOR COALITION. POSTS SUCH AS FIJIANS AFFAIRS DEPT., FOR EXAMPLE, MUST BE FILLED BY FIJIANS.

6. EMBASSKY TOOK NOTE OF POSSIBILITY OF ALLIANCE DEFEAT IN RECENT PARM SUBMISSION, AND JUDGED THAT OPPOSITION VICTORY WOULD NOT AFFECT U.S. INTERESTS HERE SIGNIFICANTLY. I BELIEVE IF NFP FORMS GOVT LEADERSHIP WILL FOLLOW MODERATE EXTERNAL POLICIES LAID BUT BY DEPOSED ALLIANCE. INDIAN PARTY LEADERS ARE FRIENDLY TO THE UNITED STATES, THOUGH MOREK READY WITH CRITICISM OR QUESTIONS THAN FIJIAN LEADERS, ESSENTIALLY A CULTURAL TRAIT SINCE THEY ARE MORE VOCAL IN ANY EVENT. WE MAY, HOWEVER, HAVE A MORE DIFFICULT TIME IN MAKING OUR VIEWS UNDERSTOOD AND ACCEPTED ON THE NUCLEAR-FREE PACIFIC ISSUE AND ON OUR POSITION IN GUAM, A REFLECTION, PERHAPS, OF ATTITUDES ABSORBED FROM THE INDIAN MOTHER COUNTRY. NFP VIEWS ON REGIONAL MATTERS LIKELY TO RESEMBLE ALLIANCE'S, THOUGH ISLAND READERS WILL BE JOLTED BY DIFFERENKT VISAGES REPRESENTING GOF AROUND CONFERENCE TABLE, AND HALLOWED PACIFIC WAY HAS FEW SUPPORTERS AMONG MORE DYNAMIC INDIANS. APISAI TORA, LEFTIST LEADER OF THE NFP FIJIAN WING IS NO FRIEND OF OURS BUT HE IS SUFFICIENTLY KNOWN FOR HIS COMMUNIST CONNECTIONS AS TO BE HEAVILY COMPROMISED WITHIN THE PARTY.

COMMENT: IN SHORT, FIJIAN POLITICAL AFFAIRS ARE IN MESS.  
IT SEEMS LIKELY AT THIS JUNCTURE THAT THE NFP WILL BE  
FORCED TO GRASP THE NETTLE AND ENDEAVOR TO GOVERN,  
BARRING AN ELEVENTH HOUR CHANGE OF HEART BY RATU MARA AND  
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ALLIANCE PARTY. AN NFP GOVERNMENT WILL BE INEXPERIENCED,  
HIGHLY UNSTABLE, AND LACKING IN COHESION INTERNALLY.  
THE ALLIANCE WILL BE REBUILDING AND WATCHING FOR THE  
RIGHT OPENING FOR A BID TO RETURN. TO MIX A PLUMBING METAPHOR,  
THE ALLIANCE HAS TAKEN A BATH IN THE ELECTIONS BUT THE PLUG  
HAS NOT BEEN PULLED ON ITS PROSPECTS.  
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## Message Attributes

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**To:** STATE  
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